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Human Rights Education in Lower Secondary School EFL Textbooks in Finland

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<p>Perusopetuksen ihmisoikeuskasvatus pyrkii jakamaan tietoa ihmisoikeuksista sekä vahvistamaan ja tukemaan ihmisoikeuksia opetuksessa ja nuorten elämässä.</p> <p>Tutkielmassa analysoidaan ihmisoikeuskasvatuksen sisältöjä englannin kielen opetuksen kontekstissa. Analyysissa tarkastellaan yläkoulun oppikirjoja YK:n ihmisoikeuskasvatusohjelman (World Programme for Human Rights Education) ja Suomen perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman näkökulmista. Tutkielma kartoittaa ihmisoikeuksiin liittyviä sisältöjä sekä oppikirjojen teksteissä ja tehtävissä että kuvissa. Tutkimusta varten analysoitiin Otavan <i>Scene</i>-sarjan ja Sanoma Pron <i>On the Go</i> -sarjan yläkoululle suunnatut oppimateriaalit.</p> <p>Tutkimusmenetelmänä käytetään sisällönanalyysiä. Oppikirjoja analysoidaan kvalitatiivisesti hyödyntäen Klaus Krippendorffin sisällönanalyysiä varten kehittämää mallia. Mallin avulla eritellään teemat, jotka oppikirjoissa sisällytetään ihmisoikeuskasvatukseen.</p> <p>Analyysi osoittaa, että ihmisoikeuskasvatusta sisältyy englannin oppikirjoihin monipuolisesti. Seitsemännellä ja kahdeksannella luokalla ihmisoikeuskasvatus on pääosin implisiittistä, mutta yhdeksännellä luokalla aiheita esitellään eksplisiittisesti. Seitsemännellä luokalla keskitytään yksilön elämänpiiriin ja kahdeksannella luokalla ihmissuhteisiin ja eri kulttuureihin. Yhdeksannen luokan oppikirjoissa näkökulma ihmisoikeuksiin on monipuolisin. Siirryttäessä seitsemänneltä luokalta yhdeksännelle luokalle aiheen käsittely laajenee painottuen yhteiskunnallisiin ja kestävän kehityksen kysymyksiin.</p>			
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1 Introduction

Human rights are based on respect for human dignity and equality. Human rights can be taught and learned in and through education; thus, human rights education is essential for societies supporting democracy and equality. According to the non-governmental human rights organisation Amnesty International (2020), human rights education can help individuals to develop attitudes and skills to advance dignity and respect both locally and globally.

Human rights have been discussed increasingly for the past decades. Finch and McGroarty (2010, p. 1) specify that the importance of protecting the rights of ethnic minorities after the two World Wars functioned as an incentive for the universal human rights agenda. As a result, the League of Nations was established after the First World War (*ibid.*). According to Finch and McGroarty (2010, p. 1), its aim was to increase transnational co-operation between various countries, which it did by setting a precedent for the United Nations (UN).

Human rights and their definition have evolved and changed throughout the years, and in the 2010s, environmental issues and sustainable development have been discussed to a greater extent within the frames of human rights (see the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education, 2019). However, human rights education has not been discussed exhaustively. For instance, in Finland, the National Core Curriculum for basic education explores human rights education quite generally. Human rights education in Western countries is mostly provided by non-governmental organisations, such as Amnesty International and Plan International (see Human Rights Centre, 2014).

Human rights education (HRE) in an English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom in Finland has not been examined before. This study aims at filling this gap. In addition to linguistic and communicational competencies, foreign language classrooms offer information about cultural affairs and globalisation. Thus, human rights and individuals' differences and similarities are natural matters to be considered in EFL classrooms.

This thesis examines human rights education on three different levels: the internationally acknowledged programme of the United Nations, the Finnish National Core Curriculum for

basic education and human rights education in the EFL classroom, specifically in EFL textbooks. The aim is to proceed deductively from broad, international discussions and goals to national perceptions, which allows the examination of the UN's ideas and their implementation in EFL textbooks. In this study, the matters considered as human rights education are based on the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education and the National Core Curriculum. This human rights content is then examined in EFL textbooks. Otava's and Sanoma Pro's EFL textbooks for lower secondary school are studied in this thesis, as Otava's and Sanoma Pro's learning materials are used in various Finnish municipalities and schools (see Otava, 2020; Sanoma Pro, 2020).

The research questions addressed in this thesis are the following:

- 1) How is human rights education defined in the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education and the National Core Curriculum for basic education?
- 2) How is human rights education evident in Finnish EFL textbooks used in lower secondary school?

In this study, chapter 2 presents the background for the analysis. Human rights and human rights education are discussed by introducing both global and national perspectives – the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) and the Finnish National Core Curriculum (NCC) and their definitions of human rights education are examined. Furthermore, chapter 2 presents previous studies on human rights education and EFL textbooks. Chapter 3 explains the data, i.e. Finnish EFL textbooks, and the research methods, i.e. qualitative research method and content analysis. Chapter 4 presents the analysis, after which chapter 5 discusses and concludes the study.

2 Background

Human rights and human rights education can be perceived in various ways, as there are multiple definitions for these phenomena. This chapter aims at explaining the usage and the meaning of these terms in the study. In addition, the definitions of human rights education in the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education (section 2.2) and the Finnish National Core Curriculum (section 2.3.1) are discussed. Furthermore, prior studies on human rights education and EFL textbooks are presented in section 2.4.

2.1 Human rights

The United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) declares that everyone is equal in dignity and rights. The Declaration is monumental as it is the first of its kind – it laid the groundwork for transnational work on human rights. The Declaration has provided the basis for other international human rights treaties and declarations, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (HRET).

According to the United Nations (2020), human rights are fundamental rights to all human beings regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion or any other status. The organisation clarifies that “human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more” (ibid.). In this thesis, the UN's definition for human rights is used, as the United Nations is an international organisation whose recommendations and texts have been approved by almost all of the countries in the world. In addition, the National Core Curriculum for basic education (NCC, 2014, pp. 14-15) discusses human rights based on the UN's human rights treaties and other binding documents. The importance of basic values is highlighted in the Curriculum. Pupils grow up in a culturally and linguistically diverse world – cultural sustainability requires cultural competence based on respect for human rights (NCC, 2014, p. 19).

2.2 Human rights education globally

Human rights education and democratic citizenship education in schools and teacher training have been discussed in various contexts in recent years (e.g. Kasa, 2019; Virta, 2017; Human Rights Centre [HRC], 2014). The definition for human rights education varies, but the definition of the United Nations is used in this study for the reasons that were stated in section 2.1. The United Nations defines human rights education in its World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) as follows:

Human rights education aims at developing an understanding of our common responsibility to make human rights a reality in every community and in society at large. In this sense, it contributes to the long-term prevention of human rights abuses and violent conflicts, the promotion of equality and sustainable development and the enhancement of people's participation in decision-making processes within a democratic system, as stated in Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/71. (WPHRE, 2006, p. 11)

According to the UN (WPHRE, 2006, p. 11), human rights education includes the promotion of sustainable development, too. Sustainable development is seen within the frames of human rights, as global human rights are needed to achieve sustainable development. Human rights education is essential in building a transnational culture of respecting and supporting human rights (WPHRE, 2006, p. 1). The UN emphasises that in addition to providing information about human rights and means to protect them, an inclusive education in human rights transmits the skills to promote and defend human rights in everyday life (ibid.). However, it needs to be remembered that the UN's Programme represents the ideas of various cultures and peoples and it is not a political recommendation.

In addition to providing knowledge, human rights education is about educating in a manner that respects human rights and is intended to strengthen respect for and protection of one's own and others' rights (HRC, 2014, pp. 34-35). The knowledge of fundamental rights is also important in educating professionals, especially teachers, in the field of human rights education (Kasa, 2019, p. 22). A culture of respect for human rights and inclusion is an effective basis for pedagogical well-being. Education for active and participatory citizenship and humanity is the task of teachers, which obliges educators and is therefore an essential part of their professional skills and, above all, their professional ethics (Virta, 2017, p. 6).

The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011) is a fundamental human rights document for the education sector, as it is based on everyone's right to HRE (Kasa, Kouros & Skottman-Kivelä, 2020, p. 14). Human rights education provides the knowledge, skills and understanding to develop attitudes and practices to strengthen a human rights friendly culture (ibid.). According to Kasa et al. (2020, p. 14), this includes recognizing one's own rights and respecting the rights of others – human rights education can thus prevent human rights violations. The Declaration states that human rights education must be carried out in accordance with the following didactic principles: information will be provided about human rights (norms, principles, values), through human rights (learning and teaching in a way that respects human rights) and for human rights (education strengthens respect and defends everyone's rights) (Kasa et al., 2020, p. 14). Therefore, these didactic principles should be apparent in EFL textbooks, too.

One difference between human rights education and other related concepts is that the Member States of the UN have an international obligation to respect and protect human rights (HRC, 2014, pp. 18-19). This includes the obligation to carry out human rights education and training. In Finland, human rights are protected by the Constitution of Finland – public authorities have a constitutional obligation to safeguard the fulfilment of human rights (Kasa, 2019, p. 22). Thus, textbook publishers should also be aware of international obligations to protect human rights when creating textbooks.

In addition to being a UN Member State, Finland is also part of the Council of Europe, a European organisation advocating for human rights and democracy. Therefore, at a European level, Finland has pledged to offer democratic citizenship education and human rights education for its citizens (see Council of Europe, 2010). In the Council of Europe Charter for Democracy and Human Rights Education, education for democratic citizenship (EDC) means education, practices and awareness-raising aimed at providing pupils and students with knowledge and skills that help them to defend and practice democracy and their rights in society (Council of Europe, 2010). According to Kasa (2019, p. 22), EDC aims at valuing diversity and enabling pupils and students to play an active role in democratic society.

Furthermore, UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, promotes education in various ways. For instance, the organisation launched an initiative, Global Citizenship Education (GCE), to help bringing peace through education by

giving its Member States the possibility to educate their citizens to become more aware of global issues (UNESCO, 2017). As a UN organisation, UNESCO's approach to human rights education is similar to the objectives of the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education.

The Member States of the United Nations create intergovernmental frameworks at the global level to a greater extent (WPHRE, 2006, foreword). One of the UN's most current programmes, the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE), focuses on supporting the development of sustainable national strategies and programmes in HRE (ibid.). Human rights related content in the Finnish National Core Curriculum (2014) is based on these kinds of international frameworks. Thus, the UN's recommendations should be evident in EFL textbooks, as they are in dialogue with the Curriculum. In this thesis, the World Programme for Human Rights Education is occasionally referred to as the WPHRE, whereas its various Plans of Action are referred to as the WPHRE and the year the discussed plan was published.

The UN's Member States have adopted several international frameworks for action (WPHRE, 2019, p. 4). For instance, the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights (1988) addressed the development of human rights information materials (ibid.). Furthermore, the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) and its plan of action can be viewed as a precursor of the current Programme, as it aimed at clarifying the implementation of sustainable strategies for HRE at the national level (ibid.) Other more recent and similar initiatives to the WPHRE include the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010), the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and the International Year of Human Rights Learning (2008-2009) (WPHRE, 2019, p. 4).

The World Programme for Human Rights Education is an ongoing programme that was proclaimed by the UN's General Assembly in 2004 (WPHRE, 2019, p. 4). The first phase (2005-2009) aimed at the implementation of human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems (ibid.). The second phase (2010-2014) addressed human rights education in higher education and educating teachers, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel about HRE, whereas the third phase (2015-2019) aimed at enforcing human rights education in the field of journalism and the work of media (ibid.). According to

the Programme (2019, p. 5), the most recent phase, the fourth phase (2020-2024), focuses on youth. All the phases have their own plans of action offering guidelines and recommendations to be followed. Furthermore, each plan of action has its own objectives, implementation strategies and suggestions on evaluation.

The objectives of the Programme have changed throughout the fifteen years it has been in progress. This thesis examines the most recent objectives that were presented in 2019 in the Plan of Action for the Fourth Phase of the Programme. Although the First Phase of the Programme (focusing on primary and secondary education) is examined further in this study, the newest objectives are noted, as they also address youth. The most current objectives of the World Programme for Human Rights Education are the following:

- (a) To promote the development of a culture of human rights;
- (b) To promote a common understanding, based on international instruments of basic principles and methodologies for human rights education and its harmonization in national policies;
- (c) To ensure a focus on human rights education at the national, regional and international levels;
- (d) To provide a common collective framework for action by all relevant actors;
- (e) To enhance partnership and cooperation at all levels;
- (f) To survey, evaluate and support human rights education programmes and other educational programmes that promote human rights, to highlight successful practices, to provide an incentive to continue and/or expand them and to develop new ones;
- (g) To promote implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. (WPHRE, 2019, p. 4)

According to the Programme (WPHRE, 2006, p. 14), human rights education should be seen as a process that includes both human rights through education and human rights in education. The former emphasises that curricula, teaching materials and methods should be linked to the learning of human rights, whereas the latter underlines the importance of respecting human rights within the education system itself (WPHRE, 2006, p. 14). Nevertheless, the UN clarifies that the organisation's Member States are aware of the differences between the countries regarding human rights education – the differences vary from national policies to grass-roots initiatives (ibid., p. 21). In addition, the WPHRE (ibid., pp. 21-22) specifies that the strategy is mainly aimed at the Member States' ministries of education, as they are usually in charge of similar affairs.

The WPHRE mentions multiple collaborators that are needed to fully implement the Programme at a national level. The UN underlines the need for support from various stakeholders, such as universities' faculties of education, professional organisations and accrediting institutions, national branches of international non-governmental organisations, parents' and students' associations, media representatives and the business community (WPHRE, 2006, p. 27).

Some of the Programme's objectives have already been met in Finland, as the Programme clarifies that human rights principles can be included in various forms of education. Consider the following:

All efforts taking place in the school system towards peace education, citizenship and values education, multicultural education, global education or education for sustainable development do include human rights principles in their content and methodologies. It is important that all of them, using this plan of action as a reference, promote a rights-based approach to education, which goes beyond teaching and learning and aims at providing a platform for systemic improvement of the school sector in the context of national education reforms. (WPHRE, 2006, p. 20)

For instance, citizenship education is provided by social studies lessons to an extent, and multicultural education is provided in foreign language classrooms in Finnish schools. This study aims at examining human rights content, defined with the help of the Curriculum and the Programme, in the EFL textbooks that are used in lower secondary school.

2.3 Human rights education in Finland

Democratic citizenship and human rights education at school have been the subjects of much publicity, as the Finnish National Core Curriculum requires both the teaching of human rights and the implementation of human rights in school (see Kasa, 2019, p. 7; Männistö, Rautiainen & Vanhanen-Nuutinen, 2017; HRC, 2014). Finland's Human Rights Centre reminds us that human rights education can be carried out, when human rights themes emerge in teaching in different subjects (HRC, 2014, p. 42).

According to a report published by Finland's Human Rights Centre in 2014, the committees observing the UN human rights treaties have expressed their concern about the shortcomings

of HRE in Finland (HRC, 2014, p. 41). Although human rights education is acknowledged in different sections of the National Core Curriculum for basic education, human rights training for teachers remains limited (ibid.). In addition, human rights education is often regarded as additional information, instead of it being compulsory to all pupils and students in all grades. Finnish youth's knowledge of political and social issues is adequate in international comparisons, but their interest in them is weak (Virta, 2017, pp. 6-7). According to Virta (2017, pp. 6-7), there are few practices in schools that support democratic participation, and human rights education has remained implicit, despite the fact that both democracy and human rights are commonly accepted basic values in education. This thesis studies both implicit and explicit human rights content in the EFL textbooks to examine the extent of HRE in the EFL classroom.

Kasa (2019, p. 7) emphasises the importance of HRE in increasing inclusion in society. A project entitled *Human rights, democracy, values and dialogue in education – The development of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in teacher education* was conducted at the University of Helsinki from 2018 to 2020 (see Kasa, 2019; Kasa, Kouros & Skottman-Kivelä, 2020). This project is one of the most recent studies focusing on human rights education in Finland. The project's aims included, among others, identifying further measures to support the development of studies in democratic citizenship and human rights education as part of teacher education (Kasa, 2019, abstract). Teacher training requires adequate education in human rights education. If future teachers learn to embed human rights education in their teaching, the teaching of HRE will become more visible nationally.

According to Kasa (2019, pp. 13-14), 96% of teacher trainees would like to teach democratic citizenship and human rights education as part of their teacher training. Nevertheless, the materials used for human rights education are often produced by various organisations, and teachers, and teacher trainees, do not make good use of them (ibid., p. 17). Thus, governmental actions are needed to provide adequate materials for human rights education in Finland. After researching several human rights education programs in her dissertation, Pudas (2015, p. 61) emphasises multidimensionality in teaching, i.e. the local, regional and global level, instead of traditional national programs.

In March 2020, action was taken towards including HRE in Finnish education. Tuija Kasa, Kristiina Kouros and Piatta Skottman-Kivelä (2020) provided teaching material for Finnish teaching professionals as a way to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the rights and responsibilities that they have. The material consists of different kinds of cases and exercises for educators to promote and defend human rights and equality in their teaching (Kasa et al., 2020). This material is a concrete example of providing assistance for teachers, and teacher trainees, on human rights issues.

2.3.1 The National Core Curriculum for basic education (for 7th, 8th and 9th grades)

The National Core Curriculum (NCC) is issued by the Finnish National Agency for Education (previously known as the Finnish National Board of Education [FNBE]), and its aim is to promote equality between Finnish schools by ensuring common guidelines for local curricula. The Curriculum has been renewed, and the upper grades of basic education implemented the renewed curricula gradually: 7th grade in 2017, 8th grade in 2018 and 9th grade in 2019 (FNBE, 2014).

According to the National Core Curriculum (2014, p. 12), the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) creates a historical and ethical interpretation of the importance of human rights. Finland has ratified multiple international human rights treaties and agreed to provide appropriate means to ensure children's learning and well-being (ibid.). These treaties include the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (NCC, 2014, p. 12). National curricula specify the obligations of these international human rights treaties, the Constitution of Finland and other legislation (Kasa et al., 2020, p. 16). The National Core Curriculum for basic education (2014) guides local curricula. However, according to Kasa et al. (2020, p. 16), local curricula ultimately guide educational institutions' practices locally.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides a legal basis for Finnish basic education (NCC, 2014, p. 12). According to the treaty, those working with and for children are bound by the general principles of the treaty, which are equality and non-discrimination, securing the best interests of the child, the child's right to protection, care and development and the child's right to express himself or herself and to be heard and respected (ibid.). Child-

centred and learner-centred teaching is also present in EFL textbooks, which is often perceived in exercises that encourage pupils to analyse and discuss matters with the help of discussion questions, for instance. Furthermore, writing through discovery is extremely learner-centred (Mukundan & Nimehchisalem, 2013, p. 208). It is a process allowing pupils to approach a subject independently and focus on the content. Learner-centredness is not studied further in this thesis, but it is noteworthy that most of the human rights content in the studied EFL textbooks are presented with learner-centred exercises and discussions.

Finnish basic education supports the pupil's growth, which is characterised by the pursuit of truth, peace and justice (NCC, 2014, p. 13). Therefore, the National Core Curriculum (2014, p. 13) emphasises that education includes the ability to handle conflicts ethically and compassionately – it is the ability of individuals and communities to make decisions based on ethical reflection. Education is manifested in the way one treats oneself, other people and the environment (*ibid.*). The National Core Curriculum for basic education (2014, p. 13) is based on respect for human rights, as basic education promotes prosperity, democracy and active participation in civil society. Aiming at equality guides the development of basic education, and education contributes to economic, social, regional and gender equality (*ibid.*). Sustainable development is also mentioned in the National Core Curriculum, which is in accordance with the WPHRE's aims of promoting sustainable development (WPHRE, 2006, p. 11). For instance, basic education examines consumption with regard to a sustainable future to improve one's way of life (NCC, 2014, p. 13).

In addition, cultural diversity is perceived as an asset (NCC, 2014, p. 13). Finnish basic education is based on the diverse Finnish cultural heritage that is continuously shaped by the interaction of various cultures (*ibid.*). Culture is a cross-curricular theme, so different subjects need to take it into consideration. According to the National Core Curriculum (2014, p. 13), teaching supports the development and growth of pupils' own cultural identities as active players in society, as well as their interest in other cultures. Simultaneously, education reinforces creativity and respect for cultural diversity and promotes interaction interculturally and within cultures, thus laying the foundation for cultural sustainability (*ibid.*). People from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds meet in basic education and learn about a variety of customs, community practices and beliefs (NCC, 2014, p. 14). Basic education lays the foundation for global citizenship that respects human rights and encourages action for positive change (*ibid.*).

In the UN's Programme, it is emphasised that one of the objectives of human rights education is to realise "the relevance of human rights to the daily life of youth at the individual, community and society levels" (WPHRE, 2019, p. 10). Therefore, cultural diversity and its benefits mentioned in the NCC seem to follow this objective of the UN's international programme. However, the National Core Curriculum gives various objectives to be fulfilled in the foreign language classroom, so textbooks need to include a great deal of social content, which requires a lot from the publishers.

2.3.2 Human rights education in the EFL classroom

In Finland, English is the most studied foreign language of all the languages offered in Finnish lower secondary school. It is also the foreign language that is studied for the longest period of time in basic education. Since January 2020, teaching English as an A1 language begins in the first year of primary school.

According to the NCC (2014, p. 398), learning together with others with different backgrounds will create conditions for authentic interaction. In the NCC (2014, p. 399), the key content areas for English as an A1 language teaching include cultural diversity and linguistic awareness. An understanding of the world's multilingualism and linguistic rights is essential, as linguistic rights are human rights (see Honko and Mustonen, 2018). According to the National Core Curriculum (2014, p. 399), EFL lessons also examine the cultures and lifestyles of some of the English-speaking countries and societies. This is an example of human rights education that aims to reduce the gap between people with different beliefs, nationalities and backgrounds. As the Curriculum emphasises the importance of respecting human rights and acting for positive change, texts and exercises of this nature are expected to be found in the studied textbooks, too. For instance, EFL textbooks can offer authentic texts containing human rights content and include pictures and texts representing various people.

Representation in lower secondary school English textbooks and workbooks enables equality and the support of human rights. As young pupils and students see drawings and pictures of different kinds of people, they fit the images into their own worldviews. According to Gray (2013, p. 26), particular representations may be used to benefit certain social ends. Therefore, some versions of reality may favour certain social groups (ibid.).

Diverse representation has been included in teaching increasingly, and according to Risager, the concept of representation has been discussed extensively in the field of cultural studies, too (Risager, 2018, p. 15). Cultural studies can be perceived as part of language education, as languages are strongly linked to the cultures in which they are used. However, Lähdesmäki (2015, p. 543) considers that textbooks' aim to be all-round inclusive is largely based on financial considerations – in order to sell to the widest possible customer base, textbooks must be acceptable.

As mentioned above, in the National Core Curriculum (2014, p. 13), cultural diversity is stated as being an asset. Furthermore, the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education (2019, p. 5) emphasises that one of the Programme's principles for HRE activities is to advance respect for diversity, while opposing discrimination on the basis of "race, colour, sex, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, birth, place of residence, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, and other bases". Thus, various ages, ethnicities, genders and sexual orientations should be represented in lower secondary school EFL textbooks.

2.4 Earlier research

Human rights education is a global topic, so there are multiple studies focusing on it. Furthermore, as textbooks are the most accessible part of teaching, their usage and themes have been discussed extensively. This section highlights some of the prior studies on both human rights education (section 2.4.1) and EFL textbooks (section 2.4.2). It is noteworthy that previous studies on human rights education emphasise the role of language lessons in providing human rights content in teaching.

2.4.1 Previous studies on human rights education

Various studies examine human rights education and its significance at a national or global level. For instance, Brian Ruane and Fionnula Waldron (2010) focus on human rights education in Ireland. They offer an insight into another European Union (EU) Member State that has made improvements in the field of human rights education during the last few years. However, human rights education in developing countries has also been focused on.

Education as a human right has not been recognised in all of the developing countries (Booth & Dunne, 2006, pp. 309-310). Booth and Dunne (2006, p. 309) remind us that there cannot be comprehensive education in human rights without a right to education.

Teachers' role in bringing awareness to human rights education has been examined broadly. Ruane, Waldron, Maunsell, Prunty, O'Reilly, Kavanagh and Pike (2010, p. 158) underline the importance of teachers in making human rights education more evident nationally and globally. An inclusive culture of interpersonal respect is important. The teacher's role is to educate pupils and students about participatory citizenship and humanity (Virta, 2017, pp. 6-7). However, according to Männistö, Rautiainen and Vanhanen-Nuutinen (2017, pp. 8-10), some reports show that there are shortcomings in HRE in teacher education, especially in Finnish society where research, academic debate and practical dialogue are needed. One problem is the lack of information: teachers are not sure what issues can be raised during lessons and how the difficult topics should be handled (*ibid.*).

Nowadays, as mentioned above, human rights issues are discussed increasingly in schools – pupils and students have become more active in society, especially concerning sustainable development (see UNICEF, 2020). Including human rights and democratic citizenship education in the lessons of curricula's various subjects increases pupils' knowledge on human rights issues. Especially during foreign language lessons, different cultures meet, and so the cultural differences through human rights could be addressed. Language lessons offer pupils and students the opportunity to enhance their linguistic and communicational competencies. Furthermore, pupils need to learn to interact and communicate in a foreign culture. Thus, human rights education would be a natural part of foreign language classrooms.

In addition, in language classes, the different nuances of vocabulary and transnational interaction are emphasised. One part of language teaching is teaching about the native countries' cultures. For example, English as a foreign language lessons are not just about dealing with the differences between American and British accents. EFL lessons can also address the role of women in India and the lack of basic human rights, such as free education, in some of the English-speaking countries. Malama (2017, p. 21) reminds us that human rights education is not always considered to be an essential part of basic education, as human rights are considered to be acknowledged in Finland. Human rights education must be made more effective, and the results of HRE should be better monitored throughout the education

system (Malama, 2017, p. 22). Although international recommendations have been made, Finland has not provided a general strategy or action plan on human rights education (HRC, 2014, p. 37).

Mia Matilainen (2011) examines upper secondary school students' and teachers' opinions on human rights education in her doctoral thesis. In her thesis, Matilainen states that some of the interviewed teachers and students emphasise specifically the potential of language teaching in human rights education (Matilainen, 2011, p. 161). Matilainen (*ibid.*) explains that the interviewed language teachers believe that some assignments could make more use of the material related to human rights, while simultaneously studying both the language and topics concerning human rights. However, some of the teachers referred to a general lack of useful HRE materials in language teaching (*ibid.*). Matilainen (2011, p. 161) reminds us that in order for materials to find their way to schools, activity from the material producers, such as non-governmental organisations, is needed. However, nowadays there are multiple NGOs offering HRE materials on their websites.

In addition, some master's theses have examined human rights education. For example, teachers' and students' opinions on HRE have been studied (e.g. Auer, 2019). Furthermore, human rights content regarding gender, representation and culture in learning materials has been examined greatly (e.g. Elonen, 2018; Holopainen, 2018). Nevertheless, human rights education in the EFL textbooks has not been examined before in Finland. This thesis aims at filling this gap.

2.4.2 Previous studies on EFL textbooks

Textbooks and workbooks used in lower secondary schools have been analysed quite exhaustively in the field of education. According to Gray (2013, p. 3), textbooks, among other teaching materials, are cultural artefacts from which ideas on the language being taught rise. Gray (*ibid.*) reminds us that pupils "may learn more from the textbook than the subject that is being taught". Therefore, the importance of textbooks should be noted. Weninger and Kiss (2015, p. 50) state that textbooks are considered to be one of the most accessible tools of teaching, and thus they are often examined. Textbooks offer an insight to teaching at some point in time (*ibid.*). Therefore, textbooks also clarify the current phenomena of teaching. Kramsch and Vinall (2015, p. 12) remind us that the communicative language teaching (CLT)

revolution of the 1970s aimed at bringing language learning close to the real world. The revolution has affected textbooks, as they try to convey convincing descriptions in, for instance, their written stories and exercises (ibid., p. 13). In addition, according to Curdt-Christiansen and Weninger (2015, p. 4), textbooks mould pupils' national, cultural and political identities.

Mikander (2015, pp. 108-109) emphasises that textbooks are examined as the primary source of education, thus they are often perceived as more important for education than the guidelines provided by the National Core Curriculum. However, textbooks and workbooks can have problematic parts in them, too. In her research, Mikander (2015, p. 108) examines Finnish geography, history and social studies textbooks which often have opinions embedded in them. According to Mikander, textbooks should offer critical questions instead of enforcing stereotypes, and teachers and teacher trainees should evaluate the used textbooks critically (Mikander, 2015, p. 120). Furthermore, in language classrooms, learners have their own identities that will either match or be in conflict with the language learner identity supported by the textbook (Ros i Solé, 2013, p. 163). Therefore, textbooks should simultaneously be relevant and to not support too strong ideologies that may alienate the learners. Thus, human rights education in the EFL textbooks should be examined critically, too.

Brian Tomlinson (2008, 2011, 2013) has conducted various studies on textbooks. Tomlinson (2008, p. 3) states that several learning materials are produced for teaching instead of learning English. The materials focus on the teaching of linguistic items rather than the learners' acquisition and developing of the language (ibid.). However, learner-centred teaching is encouraged pedagogically. Furthermore, Tomlinson (2011, p. 8) argues that the materials should have an effect on the learners to achieve impact. According to Tomlinson (ibid.), if impact is achieved, learners are more likely to process some of the language teaching. One example of achieving impact is to include appealing content for the learners, such as interesting topic areas and universal themes, in the materials (ibid.). Therefore, human rights content, as a current theme, may achieve impact. Lähdesmäki (2015, p. 530) reminds us that teaching languages is demanding, as the teaching focuses on the structure of language and grammar, but also on the ways of communicating. In general, what can be learned in a foreign language classroom is more than what is explicitly taught there (ibid., p. 532). Thus, although EFL textbooks and workbooks include human rights content mostly implicitly, the importance of HRE should not be overlooked.

3 Data and methods

This chapter explains the study's data (section 3.1) and methods (section 3.2). This thesis examines lower secondary school EFL textbooks on the basis of the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education and the Finnish National Core Curriculum. The study's data is from Otava's and Sanoma Pro's EFL textbooks, and the Programme and the Curriculum are used as bases for human rights education. Content analysis is adopted as a research method to examine qualitatively human rights education in the EFL textbooks. The differences between Otava's and Sanoma Pro's textbooks and workbooks are not studied comparatively, as the main focus of the thesis is to explore how these two examples of EFL textbook series include human rights education in their texts and images.

As human rights is a vast concept, this study focuses on the main themes of human rights education that are presented in the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE, 2006; WPHRE, 2019) and the National Core Curriculum (2014). The UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education states that human rights education aims at preventing human rights abuses and promoting equality, sustainable development and the enhancement of people's participation in decision-making processes within a democratic system (WPHRE, 2006, p. 11). The National Core Curriculum for basic education (2014, p. 13) promotes prosperity, democracy and active participation in civil society. As mentioned above, according to the Curriculum, basic education also contributes to economic, social, regional and gender equality (NCC, 2014, p. 13).

In this thesis, the human rights content focused on is sustainable development, democracy and active participation and economic, social, regional and gender equality. This study examines both explicit and implicit human rights content in the EFL textbooks. I define explicit HRE as content including words and phrases directly linked to human rights. For instance, texts about the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and human rights activists explicitly mention human rights related themes, therefore they are regarded as explicit HRE. Textbook content including exercises, texts or discussions related to HRE without mentioning human rights explicitly are perceived as implicit HRE. For example, sections on multiculturalism and bullying include human rights topics, but do not specifically mention human rights. Most of the human rights content in the textbooks is provided implicitly as part of the studied

vocabulary or texts. However, some of the 9th grade's topics concerning human rights and sustainable development are presented explicitly. Lähdesmäki (2015, p. 541) states that cultural models appear implicitly in texts and are not part of the explicit cultural examples of textbooks. Therefore, researchers have found it important to examine how texts often present unequal cultural stereotypes in our society (ibid.).

3.1 Data

This thesis examines two book series that are used in lower secondary school EFL classrooms in Finland: Sanoma Pro's *On the Go* series and Otava's *Scene* series. Both of the series were published by well-known Finnish publication houses in 2017-2019. These particular series are chosen to be analysed for this thesis because they are commonly used in Finnish schools. Furthermore, they should be in accordance with the most recent National Core Curriculum for basic education, so they have considered the recommendations of the NCC regarding HRE, too.

For this study, Sanoma Pro (the publisher of the *On the Go* series) sent me their printed textbooks and workbooks, whereas Otava (the publisher of the *Scene* series) granted access to their textbooks' and workbooks' digital versions. The textbooks and workbooks for 7th grade are *On the Go 1 Textbook*, *On the Go 1 Workbook*, *Scene 1 digikirja* and *Scene 1 digitehtävät*, while the textbooks and workbooks for 8th grade are *On the Go 2 Textbook*, *On the Go 2 Workbook*, *Scene 2 digikirja* and *Scene 2 digitehtävät*. In addition, the textbooks and workbooks for 9th graders are *On the Go 3 Textbook*, *On the Go 3 Workbook*, *Scene 3 digikirja* and *Scene 3 digitehtävät*. I refer to the textbooks as *On the Go 1/2/3* and *Scene 1/2/3*, whereas the observations and discussions on the workbooks are marked as *On the Go 1 Workbook* and *Scene 1 digitehtävät*, for instance.

Otava's *Scene 1*, *2* and *3* include six sets of topic areas. Each section has two basic texts and a "FlexiText" that pupils can study independently or with others, if they choose to. The section called "Kick-Start" introduces pupils to a new topic, whereas the "More Than Words" section practices the topic's vocabulary. Furthermore, in the "In Action" section, pupils learn to use the studied vocabulary in real communicative situations, while "Get This!" introduces learners to the most important structures of the English language. The "Culture" section aims at increasing the learners' cultural knowledge and gives the pupils the possibility to explore

various cities and countries. In the “Got It?” section, pupils can check grammar, whereas “Extra Reading” provides pupils with additional material.

Sanoma Pro’s *On the Go 1* features six units, whereas *On the Go 2* and *3* include nine different units. The units include several sections concerning the unit’s discussed topic. The “Start” section introduces pupils to a new topic, while in the “Study” section the main text is studied. The “Know” and “Talk” sections deepen the level of understanding concerning the subject. In addition, the textbooks include a section called “Your choice” in which learners can choose what they want to discuss. It is noteworthy that some of the examined units in *On the Go 2* and *3* overlap due to the gradual implementation of the renewed National Core Curriculum for basic education in 2018 and 2019.

All of the aforementioned sections are examined in this thesis to get the whole picture of the studied sets and units. However, some of the sections do not include human rights content, so they have not been analysed further in this study. Images and words are often interpreted subconsciously through imagery, metaphors and past experiences (Mäkelä and Puhakainen-Mattila, 2008, p. 78). Both images and texts have been examined. Whereas the texts carry on the topic and discussions, the images provide visual aid for the subjects. Nevertheless, most of the grammar sections are excluded in the study, as they do not include relevant content on human rights. Furthermore, workbooks include different kinds of exercises, so the exercises including human rights content are examined in this study. These kinds of exercises typically practice communicational competencies with various discussion questions.

3.2 Methods

For this thesis, content analysis is used as a research method to examine the English textbooks and workbooks that are used in 7th, 8th and 9th grades. Furthermore, parts of the UN’s World Programme for Human Rights Education and the National Core Curriculum for basic education are analysed with content analysis. The textbooks are read qualitatively with the help of the guidelines provided by the WPHRE and the NCC to examine whether the textbooks contain human rights content in textual and visual form. According to Keith Richards (2003, pp. 6-9), there are three reasons to adopt a qualitative approach to research. Firstly, it allows the exploration of “complexities and conundrums” of social world, which is not possible with quantitative research (ibid., p. 8). Secondly, qualitative research is person-

centred and thirdly, it has transformative potential for the researcher (*ibid.*). For these reasons, qualitative approach is chosen for this study.

Content analysis has been used as a research method in various disciplines in different contexts. John Gray (2010, p. 39) cites two classic definitions of content analysis. Gray states that Holsti (1969) defines content analysis as being “any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages”, while Berelson (1952/1971) believes that content analysis is “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (Gray, 2010, p. 39). However, Klaus Krippendorff’s (2013, pp. 25-26) content analysis omits some of the Berelson’s requirements. Krippendorff states that content analysis does not have to be “quantitative”, since qualitative methods have been successful, too (*ibid.*). In addition, “manifest” excludes the possibility to read between the lines, which is what experts often do (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 26). For this thesis, Klaus Krippendorff’s content analysis is chosen as a research method for it allows me to examine the data, the Programme and the Curriculum in a versatile way. This analysis enables a societal perspective in this study, too. Although this is a study of learning materials to an extent, it also aims at analysing societal influences in the textbooks through qualitative analysis.

Krippendorff’s content analysis is a research method that aims at making conclusions from the studied material to the contexts of their use (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 24). According to Krippendorff (*ibid.*), as a scientific tool, content analysis offers new insights, increases the researcher’s understanding of a particular phenomenon or informs practical actions. Reading is essentially a qualitative process (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 26). Krippendorff (2013, pp. 28–31) states features of texts that are appropriate to this thesis’s usage of content analysis: texts have no objective qualities, texts do not have single meanings, the meanings invoked by texts need not be shared and the nature of text demands that content analysts draw specific inferences from a body of texts to their chosen context. From Krippendorff’s (2013) specification, it is clear that content analysis must be done in a well-grounded and well-informed manner. The perspective of the analysis must be clear, and the reporting of findings transparent. Content analysis emphasises the dialogue between the studied text, the context and the analyst.

Krippendorff (2013, p. 36) specifies that content analyses often start with data that are not supposed to be analysed to answer specific research questions. English textbooks, for example, are not made to teach human rights, but they take into account the standards on human rights education, with the main goal being language learning. Textbooks frame human rights in different ways, so that the common features of human rights education in different books can be explored. In addition, the material selected for research is always decided on research questions – the problem of selection does not arise if the entire material can be examined (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 114). In this study, examples of HRE in the examined EFL textbooks are quite scarce, so they have all been studied in the thesis.

4 Analysis

This chapter aims at analysing explicit and implicit human rights content in Otava's and Sanoma Pro's lower secondary school EFL textbooks. Based on the guidelines provided by the WPHRE (2006; 2019) and the NCC (2014), sustainable development, democracy and active participation and economic, social, regional and gender equality are examined as human rights content in this thesis. Culture, multiculturalism and multilingualism are perceived as part of social and regional equality. In addition, appearances, bullying and the usage of school uniforms are also identified as matters related to equality.

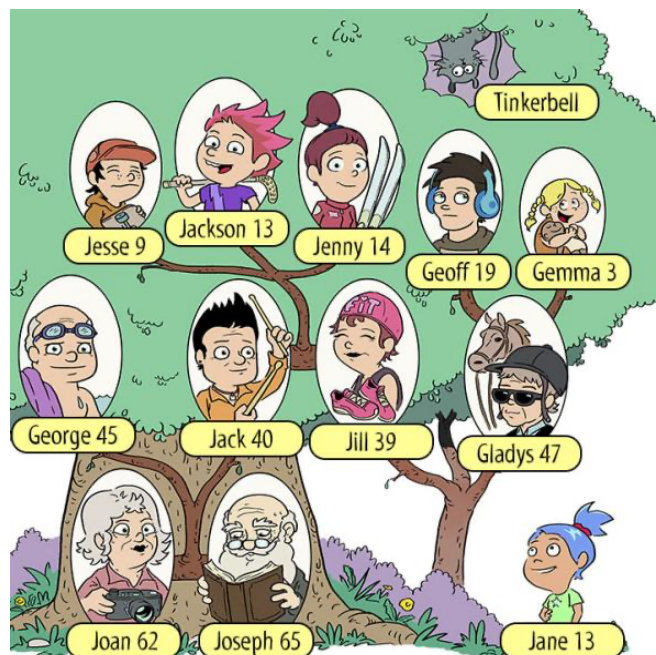
Section 4.1 focuses on the human rights content in the 7th grade EFL textbooks and workbooks, whereas section 4.2 observes HRE in 8th grade. In addition, section 4.3 examines human rights education in the 9th grade EFL textbooks and workbooks. As the human rights topics are discussed mostly implicitly in the textbooks, this study does not count quantitatively the examples of HRE. According to Littlejohn (2011, p. 185), some sections require the examination of different parts of a textbook before the researcher is able to come to a general conclusion. Therefore, this chapter examines various parts of human rights education in the textbooks before discussing them further in the discussion section 5.1.

The lower secondary school grades handle human rights and sustainable development differently. Therefore, the grades are analysed separately for this thesis. In this study, human rights content is not divided according to thematic contents. The aim is to proceed from grade to grade, as the National Core Curriculum (2014) does. The 7th grade textbooks (section 4.1) focus more on representation and diversity, whereas the 8th grade textbooks (section 4.2) consider multiculturalism and social equality, too. The 9th grade textbooks (section 4.3) have multiple references of human rights principles. For example, Otava's *Scene 3* (2019) addresses human rights by introducing Greta Thunberg, while Sanoma Pro's *On the Go 3* (2019) discusses the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Tomlinson (2008, p. 7) reminds that English learning materials should be principled, relevant and coherent. Therefore, human rights content related to environmental activists and SDGs is in accordance with Tomlinson's ideas.

4.1 7th grade

Otava's and Sanoma Pro's EFL textbooks and workbooks used in 7th grade do not present nor discuss human rights explicitly. In the 7th grade textbooks, human rights issues are not addressed by using their official terms. For example, the textbooks do not refer to linguistic rights, when they discuss the world's different languages. However, the textbooks' texts and images do convey the messages implying matters related to linguistic rights and other human rights. As it may be difficult for young learners to comprehend human rights as a concept, the subject is approached in a concrete way. For instance, discussions about school uniforms and online bullying do underline the importance of equality and shared rights, while also being topical for 7th graders.

In Otava's *Scene 1* (2017), a textbook meant for 7th graders, family vocabulary is studied with the help of a cartooned family tree. This kind of an image is a great opportunity to include diverse characters to enforce equality.



Example 1. A Family tree in *Scene 1*

In the section called “Family and Relatives”, there are twelve people portrayed as part of a family tree (see Example 1). However, all the cartooned characters are white. Furthermore, the two couples depicted in the picture are both mixed-sex couples. Gray (2013, p. 47) agrees

with Thornbury (1999) that discussing family vocabulary with heteronormative family trees enforces textbooks' implicit viewpoint on normative sexuality. Although the picture does have a single parent (Gladys) in it, the other single person in the photo does not have children and is a male character (George). This may reinforce the stereotype of mother having the custody of the children. The aim of the picture, and its associated exercises, is to teach young learners about family vocabulary. Nevertheless, having same-sex couples, instances of blended family and non-white people would strengthen the sense of equal representation. It is a view of culture that enables the examination of different representations in textbooks and their selectivity or their absence (Gray, 2010, p. 26).

However, the section does include vocabulary aiming at supporting and enforcing human rights. For instance, the words 'rainbow family' and 'blended family' are introduced to pupils. This presents a progressive perspective on society simultaneously enforcing human rights and human rights education in the EFL classroom. Although it may seem insignificant to include a certain word in a textbook's vocabulary, a teenager who is constantly looking for acceptance from society, may consider it extremely important. The studied vocabulary might include valuable human rights content.

Whereas Otava's *Scene 1* depicts multiple cartoon characters, Sanoma Pro's textbook for 7th graders, *On the Go 1*, includes images consisting mostly of photos. However, there are some drawings and cartoons in *On the Go 1*, too. The textbook's foreword states that pupils will learn English, when they "find out how people communicate in different countries and cultures" and "you [...] share your ideas and opinions" (*On the Go 1*, 2019, p. 3). The textbook encourages pupils to be active and open-minded to new cultures and people with different backgrounds. Otava's *Scene 1* (2017) also invites pupils to be brave and communicate openly. The textbook states that the most important thing is communication, that is, how you get your message across – pupils are encouraged to use sign language if necessary. The textbooks remind pupils of their possibility to tell about their opinions and to promote their ideas, which is in accordance with the UN's Programme. The WPHRE (2006, p. 12) encourages pupils and students to act for the common good and promote human rights as well as to reinforce attitudes that strengthen human rights.

Strengthening human rights is evident in the textbooks, albeit implicitly, as *On the Go 1* highlights societal matters by addressing humanitarian issues and inequality between people.

One section of the textbook introduces pupils to a character called Rishi who resides in India (*On the Go 1*, 2019, pp. 52-53). The text includes information on India and some of the country's issues with human rights.

In Mumbai there are great differences in how people live. Some are very rich, while many are extremely poor. Many of my school friends speak only English – so if they get lost in town, for example, they can't just ask anyone the way home. [...]. I want to learn as many languages as possible, so that I can understand other cultures and people better. (*On the Go 1*, 2019, p. 52)

Young learners learn about the differences and inequalities that can occur between people who are living in the same country, as Rishi tells about the wealthy and the poor (*On the Go 1*, 2019, p. 52). Living conditions are different, because people are not financially equal. However, the textbook does not include any mention of the discriminating caste system that is still quite evident in India. The objectives of the WPHRE underline that one of the Programme's aims is to raise awareness of emerging human rights issues, such as poverty and discrimination (WPHRE, 2019, p. 5). The Programme encourages analysing the changing political, social, economic and environmental problems to fully understand the state of the world (*ibid.*).

Furthermore, the WPHRE aims at reducing discrimination against language (WPHRE, 2019, p. 5). Honko and Mustonen (2018, p. 29) remind us that multilingualism is part of human rights. Every individual should have the possibility to express oneself and build own identity by using a language that makes communication easier (*ibid.*). In the text, Rishi mentions that knowing only English can put individuals into an uncomfortable position (*On the Go 1*, 2019, p. 52). Thus, the textbook raises awareness of linguistic rights. Honko and Mustonen (2018, p. 29) state that when a community considers linguistic rights and acknowledges immigrants and minorities, the socioeconomic unequal positions between individuals and families will be decreased. Nevertheless, Rishi states that he wants to learn many languages to be able to understand other cultures and people better. This encouragement to be open-minded and interested in other cultures promotes the respect of others.

Linguistic rights are one of the most evident human rights themes in *On the Go 1*, as multilingualism and the importance of respecting all the languages in the world are discussed in both the textbook and the workbook. In *On the Go 1 Workbook* (2019, pp. 140-141), multiple exercises are provided for 7th graders to be able to learn about the various languages

in the world. For example, in one of the exercises pupils are asked to recognise similarities between English words and words from other languages and to write about the languages they can speak. In addition, *On the Go 1* (2019, pp. 72-73) offers FAQs about language, which strengthens a multilingual culture. Languages are often seen as part of culture, so it is essential to teach about the importance of languages, and multilingualism, to young learners. Although the studied language in the EFL classroom is English, it is essential to include other languages in the teaching, too.

Furthermore, cultural and linguistic affairs are focused on in the story of Tom Sawyer, a well-known fictional character created by Mark Twain (*On the Go 1*, 2019, pp. 20-21). In addition to Tom Sawyer, the textbook's cartoon includes a fictional character called Jim, an African American boy that Tom sees passing by his house. The characters speak English, but they use slang in various forms. For instance, 'ain't', 'gonna', 'fishin'', 'whup' and 'warn't' are some of the words included in the short cartoon (ibid.). The slang words may be included to depict the time or to portray the different ways individuals speak and have the right to speak.

In addition to linguistic rights, there is another example of human rights in the story written by Twain. When Tom asks Jim to paint a fence with him, Jim refuses and declares that "aunt Polly whup me for sure" (*On the Go 1*, 2019, p. 20). This kind of statement indicating physical violence towards a child may raise a few questions in the classroom. Thus, children's rights, and hence human rights, could be addressed. The cartoon also addresses race. In the story, Jim is aunt Polly's slave. The African American Jim has strict rules and the prospect of violence, if he misbehaves. Slavery per se is a difficult topic to be discussed with 13-year-old pupils, but Daffue-Karsten, Haapala, Ojala, Ojala, Peuraniemi, Rappold and Semi (2019) have likely included this cartoon for a reason in the textbook. The differences between different eras are apparent.

Culture is a theme that is addressed in all of the textbooks for different grades. However, Lähdesmäki (2015, p. 536) reminds us that some researchers consider it difficult to define the target culture when teaching English, as English is the world's *lingua franca* and spoken all over the world. English is used in communication between non-native speakers, thus making it unjustified to base English textbooks solely on British and American culture (ibid.). Nevertheless, changes have been made in EFL textbooks to include various countries that use English in daily interactions. *Scene 1* (2017) includes sections on culture that focus on certain

English-speaking countries or regions, such as Australia, Canada, the Caribbean and the USA. Pupils are encouraged to get to know the country or region more and do, for instance, presentations on it in pairs. Accepting and emphasising multiculturalism is a great part of language education.

Cultural diversity is also approached by introducing different kinds of school lunches to the young learners in Sanoma Pro's *On the Go 1*. The subject is close to pupils, as they presumably have lunch at school every day. In *On the Go 1* (2019, p. 89), there are pictures of school lunches in India, Tanzania, Thailand, the USA and Wales. This is a way to introduce other cultures to the learners, too. However, the section does not have any exercises or activities concerning this subject.

Differences between cultures are also addressed in the EFL textbooks. In *Scene 1*, a text called "Team Williams" underlines differences between Finland and the United States.

I think that it is great that Finland is such a safe place. I can go outside to play with my friends and our parents don't have to worry about us. (*Scene 1*, 2017)

Hiitti, Lumiala, Parikka, Sloan and Tolkki (2017) have decided to have a teenager say this sentence in the text. The character called Kion worries about himself and his family and sees security and safety as important parts of healthy everyday life. Addressing security and safety is a way to address human rights issues. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, article 3) states that everyone has the right to security of person. It is important for the young learners to know about security, and how in some countries, safety is not guaranteed for all equally, especially for children. Another example mentioning children's rights is in *On the Go 1* in which California gold rush is introduced (*On the Go 1*, 2019, pp. 56-57). In the text, there is a letter from a boy called Joshua to his mother. In the letter, Joshua tells how looking for gold is hard work and how the days are long (ibid.). The letter depicts the usual day of Joshua who, as a child, is working constantly to find gold, which may refer to child labour.

Both of the 7th grade textbooks that are examined in this study include texts and vocabulary on fashion, especially related to equality and school life. For example, *On the Go 1* has a few pictures of girls wearing hijabs (*On the Go 1*, 2019, pp. 13, 49 and 93). While examining the

textbook, it is not clear whether these pictures are included in the textbook unintentionally or in order to support equal representation of religion.

On the Go 1 (2019, pp. 68-69) also explores school uniforms and their usefulness for pupils and students. The usage of school uniforms is a human rights issue, as it is often associated with social equality. In the textbook, pupils are encouraged to think about school uniforms and the reasons for their usage. In the text “School uniforms: to wear or not to wear?”, students discuss the advantages and disadvantages of school uniforms. A character called James says that students should be free to think for themselves, and thus school uniforms constrain them in a way (ibid.). On the other hand, a girl called Shanti thinks that school uniforms are affordable for all and as everyone dresses the same way, they are all equal (ibid.). Both of these opinions give the pupils in an EFL classroom the possibility to discuss the pros and cons of school uniforms. School uniforms are often used to increase the equality between pupils and students, but the right for own opinions and wants (e.g. to be dressed in a certain way) might be disregarded. *Scene 1* (2017) also has a section on school uniforms in its “School Looks” section. In the section, students emphasise the easiness of school uniforms – not the equality they provide for students.

In addition to school uniforms, other aspects of school life are depicted in the studied textbooks. *On the Go 1* (2019, pp. 70-71) has a text on bullying, for example. In the story, a picture of a girl, called Samantha, is posted online without her consent. After speaking up about the matter to her friends, Samantha is left out alone. The story does not end happily – Samantha’s family arranges for Samantha to go to another school. In *On the Go 1 Workbook* (2019, p. 139), pupils are encouraged to give advice on how to stop bullying. In addition, there are different kinds of claims that the 7th graders should either agree or disagree with. Here are a few examples of the statements:

Girls bully just as much as boys do in schools.
If someone bullies you, you should ask your friends for help.
If someone bullies you, never tell adults about it. (*On the Go 1 Workbook*, 2019, p. 138)

Engaging young learners to discuss serious subjects, such as bullying, is an example of implementing human rights through education with topics related to equality. The WPHRE (2019, p. 11) underlines that human rights education helps people to handle hate and

discrimination, such as bullying and hate speech, online and offline. Human rights education can be a way to help the youth to deal with daily issues. The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare (2020) states that abusive treatment and bullying online refers to mocking, humiliating, disseminating information without permission and threatening someone with a phone, computer, tablet or other digital device. The role of social media is increasing constantly, and social media platforms are often the places where bullying manifests. Schools do not provide guidance on online bullying as much as they could. Samantha's story in *On the Go 1* is an example of a text that could use cooperation with other organisations and institutions (see NCC, 2014, p. 7; WPHRE, 2006, p. 20). The text could include a box, for instance, informing the pupils about online bullying and how to proceed if they are witnessing it.

4.2 8th grade

The 8th grade textbooks and workbooks include chapters focusing on different countries, culture, media, relationships and society. The textbooks include some discussions and topics on human rights, and they offer the possibility to discuss matters further in the classroom.

The World Programme for Human Rights Education (2006, p. 11) emphasises that human rights education transmits the skills that are needed to promote human rights in daily life. Thus, the capability to tell about one's feelings and ideas and to be able to be empathetic are part of human rights education, too. By being polite, one does not insult anyone's identity, culture or ideas, which is a way to promote human rights. Openness and communication are essential elements of respecting others. Otava's *Scene 2* (2017) has a section called "Better Together" focusing on feelings and relationships. In the section, pupils are able to tell how they feel in certain situations and why they feel a certain way. In addition, learners are encouraged to discuss reflectively the characteristics of a good friend.

In addition to the pupils' own emotions and relationships, the 8th grade textbooks focus on society, too. Compared to 7th grade, 8th grade is discussing social equality more profoundly. *Scene 2* (2017) includes a few texts on the European Union, such as "Do You Speak My Language?" and "Culture: The European Union". The questions in the culture section include the following:

What countries belong to the EU?
 What are the official languages of the EU?
 How many different languages do we speak in the EU countries? Which languages are they?
 When did Finland become a member of the EU?
 When was the EU founded? Why was it founded?
 How many countries use the Euro as their currency?
 How can you get information about the EU?
 What are the pros and cons of the EU? (*Scene 2, 2017*)

This is an example of global citizenship education that promotes the ideas of human rights education, too. Learners are encouraged to examine the EU Member States and their languages. They are invited to become interested in social matters and different cultures. Asking pupils the reasons behind the founding of the European Union provides the learners with information on democracy and multilateralism. In addition, giving the young learners the opportunity to think about the creation of an international organisation may help them to learn about teamwork and cooperation with others.

The EU promotes human rights by ensuring the implementation of shared rights in its Member States. In fact, the European Union was awarded the 2012 Nobel Prize for promoting peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe (European Union, 2020). Hence, “united in diversity”, the motto of the EU, is appropriate for human rights education. The exercises on the EU follow the multilingualism chapters discussed in 7th grade. After the pupils have been introduced to languages and the meanings of different languages, they are able to broaden progressively their ideas to a transnational organisation that has multiple languages in use.

However, it is essential to examine what is omitted in the textbooks and workbooks concerning human rights and especially human rights violations. The omitted matters that are addressed in this thesis are frequently discussed in Finland, and therefore they could be presented in the EFL textbooks, too. In *On the Go 2*, India and Hong Kong are introduced among other English-speaking cities and countries. Nevertheless, the textbook does not clearly explain arranged marriages in India or human rights violations that are occurring in Hong Kong. The section on Hong Kong in *On the Go 2* discards many matters related to the city. For instance, according to Richardson (2019), the authorities of Hong Kong have denied permits to hold protests and have targeted journalists who have tried to report the city’s situation. Therefore, freedom of speech is not achieved due to Hong Kong’s refusal to commit

to human rights. In the India section, arranged marriages and the unequal treatment of daughters and sons are addressed (*On the Go 2*, 2019, pp. 108-123).

India's arranged marriages have been questioned due to their linkage to forced marriages. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, article 16[2]) declare that "marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses". Human rights are not wholly fulfilled, if both of the spouses are not giving their full consent to the marriage. Nevertheless, the textbook mentions that "in India, a marriage is more than just two people who fall in love and get married," (*On the Go 2*, 2019, p. 112). Furthermore, it is emphasised that Indian parents are "stricter with their daughters than with their sons" (ibid.). These kinds of statements explain some human rights issues in India.

Pupils may wonder why girls are treated differently to boys in India in which case the teachers should have the tools and knowledge to explain to their pupils the reasons behind this. *On the Go 2 Workbook* (2019, p. 171) gives pupils the possibility to discuss this matter further with a writing exercise. Pupils are able to choose from three options to write about one of which is the following:

Pavani wants to have the same rights as her brother. Write a dialogue that Pavani and her parents have about treating boys and girls equally. Practice the dialogue and make a video. (*On the Go 2 Workbook*, 2019, p. 171)

This is a creative task that gives the learners the opportunity to think about gender-related issues and write about them in their own words. This assignment is related to human rights education. In addition, according to the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2006, p. 19), ensuring human rights through education is essential to guarantee functional human rights education in classrooms. *On the Go 2* has discussion questions for pupils to discuss India's perceptions on marriage, which combines learning English with discussing human rights matters. Consider the following:

Do Finnish parents treat their sons and daughters the same way? Give some examples.
Pavani's mother says that life in Canada is different from life in India. What things might be different?
If you have an arranged marriage, can you learn to love the other person over the years?

Why do you think people who have arranged marriages have fewer divorces than people who have love marriages? (*On the Go 2*, 2019, p. 113)

The questions are quite thorough. For instance, the final question mentioned above can be quite difficult for a 14-year-old pupil to answer. Nevertheless, as Tomlinson (2008, p. 5) states, giving the learners the possibility to participate in meaningful interactions and conversations develops the learners' communicative competence.

Societal discussions are continued with a discussion on immigration. Sanoma Pro's *On the Go 2* has a section on immigrants migrating to Canada (*On the Go 2*, 2019, pp. 150-151). The section is a way to introduce different kinds of nationalities to the learners, but it is also a current and important topic to be included in the EFL classroom. Consider the following examples of the chapter's discussion questions:

In 2015, many Syrians started to immigrate to Canada. What were some of the possible reasons?
What reasons might people have to leave their own country? (*On the Go 2*, 2019, p. 151)

Syrian immigrants were fleeing from war and violence. As basic human rights were not guaranteed, some of the Syrians made the decision to leave the country. This exercise in an EFL textbook is significantly related to human rights issues. The 8th graders are given a complicated matter to consider. They should be able to learn more about the state of the world and the inequalities between different citizens.

Furthermore, gender, especially women's rights, is also presented in the learning materials. *On the Go 2 Workbook* includes a section about gendered surnames. It is specified that although both "Mrs" and "Ms" are used for women nowadays, "Ms" is more common to use because it supports equality of the sexes (*On the Go 2 Workbook*, 2019, p. 167). In addition, *On the Go 2* has a section on genders in which girls and boys are compared to each other (*On the Go 2*, 2019, pp. 122-123). However, this kind of classification of genders enforces stereotypes. Pupils who are transgender or of other genders, may find these types of exercises discriminating. The section includes the following statements, among others:

“If boys get upset by what their mates do or say to them, they won’t show it, or if they do, their mates will just say, ‘Oh, I was just mucking around.’ That’s their answer to everything!” Rachel, 15

“Why do girls worry about their weight so much? They’re always going on about how fat they are, even if they’re really thin.” Andrew, 15 (*On the Go 2*, 2019, pp. 122-123)

It is understandable to see the direction the publisher is trying to take with these statements. The section has topics that interest teenagers, such as relationships and dating. Nevertheless, asking pupils to categorise girls and boys can already be problematic, but the exercise also emphasises cultural assumptions (Gray, 2013, p. 50). Comments that predict boys as not being sensitive and girls being worried about their looks may make individuals feel like they should behave in a certain way.

The Family Federation of Finland (i.e. Västeliitto) provides guidance and help for youth between the ages of 13 and 19. Young people are encouraged to ask, if they have any questions concerning matters related to puberty. The Family Federation of Finland (2020) articulates that one’s appearance is a sensitive topic to the youth. It is common for a young person to be concerned about their own altered body and often young people compare their bodies to others’ (Family Federation of Finland, 2020). Therefore, the topic chosen by Daffue-Karsten et al. is relevant for adolescents. Nevertheless, due to its sensitivity, the topic should be addressed carefully. Otava’s *Scene 2* (2017) discusses appearances, too. The textbook’s chapter on looks has an accompanying drawing that includes a diverse set of characters (see Example 2).



Example 2. Every body in *Scene 2*

This picture includes people of all ages, genders, ethnicities and sizes. One of the characters has braces, while some of the other characters have piercings and tattoos. In addition, the section has an exercise in which pupils are requested to pay a compliment to their pair (*Scene 2*, 2017). They are asked to tell their peer what they like about their looks (e.g. “I like your hair”) and so forth. This is a positive way to approach the subject of appearances. However, this exercise should also be approached carefully, so that any kind of insulting or bullying is avoided.

As *On the Go 1* discusses online bullying, *Scene 2* examines internet and online life, too. The “Africa Online” section focuses on the usage of internet in African countries (*Scene 2*, 2017). However, instead of focusing only on the individuals’ choices to use social networks, the chapter takes the online topic to a societal level. The text includes diagrams that show facts about internet users. It is mentioned that 89% of Americans, 80% of Europeans and 25% of Africans have internet access. However, it is emphasised that the number of users with internet access who use social networks is far greater in Africa (76%) than in the US (71%) and Europe (65%). The section highlights, for instance, Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania as countries that use social networks greatly. Consider the following discussion questions that are given for the 8th graders:

- Why do you think that so few Africans have access to the internet, compared to Europeans?
- Why do you think that so few Ethiopians have access to the internet, compared to South Africans?
- Why do you think that more African than European internet users use social networks?
- Why do you think that the number of internet users in Africa is growing? (*Scene 2*, 2017)

This exercise gives the pupils the possibility to compare different African countries together and compare them to European countries. Pupils may be able to grasp the differences between the regions mentioned in the questions and realise the distinctions in fulfilling equal human rights. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the individual countries of Africa and Europe instead of discussing the continents as a whole.

As in the 7th grade textbooks, multiculturalism and cultural affairs are taught and presented in the 8th grade textbooks, too. *Scene 2* (2017) has a section called “High Five!” in which pupils

are told about how hands are used to communicate in different countries. After learning about different signs that are used in various countries, such as France, Germany and Greece, pupils are asked to discuss foreign languages and the need for them in pairs:

What languages do you speak?
 What countries would you like to visit? Why?
 Do you use a lot of gestures when you speak? What kind of gestures?
 What is the most challenging thing when you communicate in a foreign language?
 Have you had any difficult situations when you have talked to a foreigner?
 Explain. (*Scene 2*, 2017)

These kinds of questions are discussed in Sanoma Pro's *On the Go 1* for 7th grade, whereas Otava's *Scene 2* discusses them in the textbook meant for 8th grade. As this is an English textbook, it is natural that the importance of speaking foreign languages is often emphasised and discussed. The importance of communication is highlighted in the exercise. Pupils are encouraged to tell about the challenges they face while speaking a foreign language. The National Core Curriculum (2014, p. 13) claims that interaction interculturally and within cultures lays the foundation for cultural sustainability. Thus, it is important to include sections on interculturality and multilingualism in learning materials.

The EFL textbooks and workbooks include sections on indigenous people, too. For example, Aboriginal Australians are discussed in Sanoma Pro's textbook for 8th graders (*On the Go 2*, pp. 46-47). Furthermore, there is also a chapter on New Zealand's Maoris (ibid. pp. 102-103). Teaching about indigenous people is a crucial part of language classes to present human rights through education. The UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education promotes "understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups" (WPHRE, 2006, p. 13). Furthermore, the National Core Curriculum (2014, p. 14) underlines that learning across cultures, religions and beliefs creates the conditions that lay the foundations for global citizenship that respects human rights. Education based on human rights respects and emphasises a wide range of perspectives, which is why, in addition to intercultural understanding, it is also essential to place particular emphasis on respect for and understanding of the unique value of each human being in all human relations (Malama, 2017, p. 20).

4.3 9th grade

The topics presented in various sections of the 9th grade textbooks are thoroughly social and current. For example, there are discussions on climate change and the state of the environment both in the *On the Go* and the *Scene* series.

Environmental education is part of the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education, as it is stated in the Programme's principles for HRE activities that one of the principles is to "[e]ncourage analysis of chronic and emerging human rights problems – including poverty, violent conflicts and discrimination – in the light of rapidly changing developments in the political, social, economic, technological and environmental fields, leading to responses and solutions that are consistent with human rights standards and foster social cohesion" (WPHRE, 2019, p. 5).

On the Go 3 (2018, pp. 92-93) has a section in which words associated with recycling are introduced and used in discussion questions. In the section, there are multiple reminders of the importance of reducing, reusing, recycling and respecting the environment. In addition, the textbook has a section on the usage of plastic (*On the Go*, 2018, pp. 98-99). Pupils are also given the possibility to do a quiz to test how green they are (ibid. pp. 96-97). These kinds of activities and exercises aim to show pupils that climate change can be tackled through a variety of climate measures, such as recycling and avoiding using too much plastic. The pupils are shown how their own actions can make an impact in the world.

Scene 3 (2019) has a passage about climate change that aims at demonstrating the effects of global warming. Consider the following:

Imagine that you and your family had to leave your country and never come back. How would you feel? What if the entire population of your country also had to leave with you? It's a scary thought, isn't it? [...] This is what is happening today, in Kiribati. [...] You have probably heard a lot about climate change in recent years. Scientists proved that man-made climate change is real, and that it will cause a lot of problems in the future. One of the biggest problems will be higher sea levels. But what you may not know is that higher sea levels are already a catastrophe in many places around the world today. One of these places is Kiribati. (*Scene 3*, 2019)

In the textbook, climate change is presented with a current example to show pupils that climate change is real and happening currently. The authors have decided to approach the matter by illustrating the feelings that the victims of climate change have.

On the Go 3's unit 9 offers pupils a great deal of information on sustainable development. The pupils are encouraged to discuss the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, among other things (*On the Go 3*, 2018, pp. 158-159). The textbook introduces SDGs as follows:

These are the global Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure a better life for all. The goals are set for the whole world by the United Nations. (*On the Go 3*, 2018, pp. 159)

This is directly linked to the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education. In the textbook, pupils are asked to listen to and repeat the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (*On the Go 3*, 2018, p. 159). Learners are also encouraged to translate SDGs from English to Finnish and vice versa (see Example 3).



Example 3. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals in *On the Go 3*

On the Go 3 Workbook includes various exercises on SDGs. For example, pupils are asked to specify five goals that have already been taken care of in Finland and three goals that need to be considered more (*On the Go 3 Workbook*, 2019, p. 244). This way pupils have to focus on all the goals and think about them carefully. Furthermore, the workbook includes an exercise in which pupils are supposed to connect one of the Sustainable Development Goals with the

right caption that goes with it (ibid., p. 245). For example, “get vaccinated” should be connected with SDG3 (Good Health and Well-Being).

In *On the Go 3*, the introduction of SDGs is followed by speeches of advocates for human rights – Malala Yousafzai, Barack Obama and Emma Watson. The publisher’s decision to include a young activist, a president and a well-known actress is probably to make young language learners more interested in the topic. For instance, in *On the Go 3* (2018, pp. 170-173), parts of Malala Yousafzai’s story are included as reading material for pupils. It is important for pupils and students to see and hear stories from inspirational people to become inspired themselves.

Furthermore, in *Scene 3* (2019), there is a video of the environmental activist Greta Thunberg giving a speech about climate change. Thunberg’s speech was held at the COP24 in Poland in 2018. After listening to Thunberg’s speech, pupils are encouraged to write about it. They are given a few words to write about, such as ‘economic growth’, ‘wealthy people’, and ‘the climate crisis’. Thus, both of the book series have examples of young activists that presumably intrigue other young individuals. It is emphasised that learning materials need to provide authentic usage of written and spoken language to engage the learners cognitively and affectively (Tomlinson, 2008, p. 4). Helping learners to observe examples of authentic language usage eases their language acquisition (ibid.). Providing real-life examples of human rights speeches and texts increases the pupils’ linguistic competences, too. *On the Go 3* encourages pupils to discuss human rights matters more thoroughly with these discussion questions:

Why did the Taliban consider Malala such a threat that they tried to kill her?
 How can educating girls in developing countries change society?
 Does the United States seem united to you today? Give examples to support your opinion.
 Do you think that men and women are basically the same? Give examples.
 In your opinion, is the world mostly a good or a bad place? Give reasons. (*On the Go 3*, 2018, p. 163)

All of these questions require a considerable amount of thinking and reasoning. 9th graders are asked to think about gender equality, the state of the world and inequality between different kinds of people in one single exercise. This one exercise fulfils many of the guidelines of the WPHRE and the NCC, such as promoting human rights through education.

In addition to including explicit discussions on climate change, *On the Go 3* has little snippets around the entire book concerning global warming. For instance, when introducing Jamaica, the textbook's character called Xavier tells the readers that hurricanes hit Jamaica more often than before because of climate change:

This is all because of climate change. Unfortunately, my country is one of the world's climate hot spots. Climate change, especially the rising sea level and increasingly severe storms, affects us very badly. (*On the Go 3*, 2018, p. 47)

The study chapter is actually meant to introduce survival vocabulary, but the authors have decided to include the reasons behind the increasing number of hurricanes as background information for the chapter. This is another example of including human rights through education, as sustainable development is within the frames of human rights. In addition, a chapter called The Seabin Project in *Scene 3* (2019) introduces an innovation that aims at helping the environment by removing rubbish from the oceans. The textbook's character says the following:

The Seabin Project began because I wanted to help clean the world's oceans. I've spent most of my life around water, so I know that ocean pollution is a big problem. (*Scene 3*, 2019)

This is another example of discussing environmental issues implicitly. The text's main topic is to introduce pupils to an innovation and include vocabulary on that. However, Banfield, Hiitti, Lumiala, Parikka and Tolkki (2019) have decided to have the discussion on innovations concerning climate change, too, which serves as an implicit way to include environmental education into language teaching.

Scene 3 (2019) combines the concepts of multiculturalism and sustainable development. One of the textbook's chapters tells pupils about ecotourism and how to travel in India without harming the environment:

Only support businesses that care for the environment.
Respect our local cultures and beliefs.
Never leave rubbish in natural areas.
Recycle everything that you can.
Support local people and buy only local food and products. (*Scene 3*, 2019)

After reading the text, the pupils are asked to tell their pair why someone has written this specific text. This is an interesting question, as the learners are asked to explain the importance of teaching them about respecting other cultures and the environment.

As mentioned above, multiculturalism is an occurring theme in all of the EFL textbooks and workbooks for lower secondary school, which is understandable as language classrooms often focus on cultures in which the studied language is used. In *On the Go 3*, pupils are introduced to four teenagers from Tokyo, London/Dubai, Punjab and Pennsylvania (*On the Go 3*, 2018, pp. 144-145). In the section's exercises, pupils are, for instance, asked about the differences between Sikhism and Hinduism (*On the Go 3 Workbook*, 2019, p. 214). This is an example of inviting pupils to learn more about other cultures and religions by still focusing on the studied language. In addition, the section on culture in *Scene 3* (2019) encourages pupils to mark on the map of India all the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Besides teaching about India, the exercise introduces the global UNESCO World Heritage Sites to the learners. This is an example of networking with other organisations and institutions, which has been prompted by the National Core Curriculum (NCC, 2014, p. 7) and the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2006, p. 20).

South Africa is also studied from the point of view of multiculturalism. In *On the Go 3* (2018, p. 77), South Africa is introduced as a "multicultural stew". For example, Table Mountain and the Kruger National Park are introduced in the culture section to pupils. As mentioned above, the UN's Programme seeks to find understanding among all national, ethnic and religious groups (WPHRE, 2006, p. 13). Multiculturalism is an important, maybe even the most crucial, part of human rights education. However, in addition to cultural affairs, South Africa's societal matters are discussed in the textbook.

In *On the Go 3* (2018, pp. 78-79), South Africa is approached with the help of human rights issues. The textbook has a few statements that reveal South Africa's human rights violations:

In 1948 the Europeans in the country formed a minority government that excluded everyone that was not white. White people ran the country and only they could vote. (*On the Go 3*, 2018, p. 78)

Nelson Mandela was a freedom fighter and the symbolic leader of anti-apartheid movement. [...]. Soon after he had been released from jail, he became the country's first black president. He was a man who stood up for democracy, freedom, peace and human rights. (*On the Go 3*, 2018, p. 78)

These excerpts depict racism that has been evident in South Africa. South African history is addressed by telling the pupils about the discrimination that existed in the country. However, the omitted facts need to be considered, too. When discussing apartheid and the like, the textbook disregards the current situation in South Africa that is still going through the repercussions of apartheid. The textbook focuses more on the cultural than societal affairs of today's South Africa.

Sanoma Pro's *On the Go 3* includes a section concerning democracy in which the learners are introduced to the history of democracy (*On the Go 3*, 2018, pp. 166-167). The textbook states that "[...] you may disagree with the decision, but you still have to respect the will of the majority" (ibid.). The chapter begins by telling the pupils that the Greeks invented the word "democracy" (ibid., p. 166). Furthermore, it is mentioned that women and slaves were not considered citizens, and they could not vote (ibid.). This may prompt various discussions in the classroom on how democracy and human rights have developed. The role of kings and queens and the French Revolution are also mentioned in the text, which is followed by passages about women's rights, Martin Luther King Jr., the apartheid system in South Africa and the Arab Spring (ibid.). These are all serious matters to be addressed in the EFL classroom. This chapter plays a great part in fulfilling human rights in education. It is important to dedicate an entire section for democracy and its importance.



Example 4. Society in *Scene 3*

Like *On the Go 3, Scene 3* also discusses society and democracy. In *Scene 3* (2019), society is introduced by including vocabulary focusing on society with a drawing that has been placed above the vocabulary (see Example 4). The drawing includes various situations that can occur in society. The vocabulary associated with it includes the words ‘democracy’, ‘minority’, ‘inequality’, ‘equality’, ‘disabled’, ‘social security’, ‘poverty’, ‘racism’ and ‘ethnicity’ (*Scene 3*, 2019). The drawing depicts a protest that demands peace, freedom and welfare. These are some of the human rights that are needed to be secured for all individuals globally. In addition, a presumably homeless man is asking for help, while police officers are arresting someone. This picture offers the possibility for discussions on human rights issues in the EFL classroom. Discussions may be provoked, for example, by the fact that such situations are possible in Finland. There are countries in the world where, for instance, voting and protestations are not allowed for all. Some rights are self-evident to others, whereas people from other countries may not have the same rights.

Scene 3 (2019) also has a chapter called “Common Ground” in which pupils are asked to have a debate on current affairs. The statements, given by the textbook, are related to human rights and require the pupils to think about society more. The statements go as follows:

The 16-year-olds should be allowed to vote in elections.
 Same-sex couples should be allowed to adopt children.
 Public transport should be free.
 Finland should take in more refugees.
 16-year-olds should be allowed to get a driving licence for a car.
 School should be mandatory until the age of 18.
 People should eat more vegetarian food.
 Only electric cars should be allowed. (*Scene 3*, 2019)

All of these questions encourage young learners to become more participatory and active citizens. As can be seen from the questions, they mostly focus on equality and sustainable development. Thus, this exercise fulfils many of the objectives mentioned in the World Programme for Human Rights Education. *Scene 3* (2019) also has a section on equality in education. “The Unusual Schools Podcast” presents a high school called Harvey Milk High School that has gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students. It is mentioned that the school supports equal rights for all and that it is important that no one feels discriminated. The podcast mentions that sexual minorities may be bullied or attacked, and Harvey Milk High

School wants to guarantee inclusion and equality for all. The same section has an exercise in which pupils are requested to tap an online deck of cards and share their opinion on a certain subject in English. The subjects include, among others, ‘equality’, ‘basic education’, ‘the future’, ‘bullying’, ‘rights’, ‘safety’ and ‘freedom’.

As active participation is one of the human rights themes examined in this thesis, it is noteworthy that both *On the Go 3* and *Scene 3* include texts and exercises related to active citizenship and work-life. In *On the Go 3* (2018, pp. 108-109), essential 21st century skills are introduced to the pupils. The Organisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development (OECD) states that education can help individuals to shape their own lives and help them to aid others to shape theirs (OECD, 2018). The skills help the youth to work in a society that is built on certain expectations. The 21st century skills that Sanoma Pro presents are collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, ethics and digital literacy (*On the Go 3*, 2018, pp. 108-109). These are skills that advance human rights, as they teach the young learners about teamwork and respecting other cultures.

In addition, *Scene 3* (2019) has a section called “Staff Only” in which pupils are introduced to work-related vocabulary to be able to look for summer jobs, for instance. This kind of an exercise prepares the pupils to become active members of the community. Raising awareness of societal issues and matters follows the recommendations of the UN’s World Programme for Human Rights Education. The WPHRE, as a global initiative, encourages all the citizens of the UN Member States to participate in democratic decision-making processes (see WPHRE, 2012). Thus, the recommendations of the UN’s Programme are followed in the EFL textbooks. Teaching young learners about society and current affairs is a way to acknowledge democracy and certain social rights. Furthermore, including related pictures and drawings increases pupils’ learning process, as they are able to see, instead of just hear and read, what is happening in the world.

5 Discussion

This chapter discusses and concludes the thesis. The study's main findings and the implications of the study are discussed in section 5.1. Limitations of the study (section 5.2) and suggestions for future research (section 5.3) are also presented in this chapter.

5.1 Main findings

The aim of this study has been to examine whether human rights education is evident in Otava's and Sanoma Pro's EFL textbooks for 7th, 8th and 9th grades. To begin with, to be able to use the term "human rights education" correctly, I have defined the term with the help of the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education and the National Core Curriculum.

The UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education encourages all the UN Member States to include human rights in education and through education (WPHRE, 2006, p. 14). Therefore, teaching materials and methods should be linked to the learning of human rights, and the importance of respecting human rights within the education system itself should be noted (WPHRE, 2006, p. 14). This is evident in the Finnish National Core Curriculum, as it emphasises the role of human rights in education. The National Core Curriculum for basic education (2014, p. 13) is based on the respect for human rights, as basic education promotes prosperity, democracy and active participation in civil society. In addition, basic education supports economic, social, regional and gender equality (ibid.). Therefore, in this thesis, with the help of the guidelines provided by the WPHRE and the NCC, human rights content is matters related to sustainable development, democracy and active participation and economic, social, regional and gender equality. After defining what is included in "human rights education", I have critically analysed the EFL textbooks.

During the analysis, it became evident that human rights content is included in the studied EFL textbooks. In the lower secondary school EFL textbooks published by Otava (the *Scene* series) and Sanoma Pro (the *On the Go* series) human rights issues are presented both in textual and visual form. The discussed topics vary from environmental issues to respecting other cultures equally. The most evident human rights themes in Otava's and Sanoma Pro's

textbooks are education, equality and democracy, multiculturalism and multilingualism, safety and security and sustainable development.

Nevertheless, the grades have different approaches to these human rights themes. 7th grade's topics focus on the pupil's own life for the most part. 8th grade has a couple of examples of HRE, while 9th grade has many examples of human rights themes in the EFL textbooks. The progressive way of advancing from the pupils' own immediate surroundings to the global scale is evident. Pupils are first introduced to ideas and matters close to their own lives in 7th grade, while 8th grade focuses on society more, for instance with discussions on immigration and democracy. In 9th grade, the global level is considered, and pupils are encouraged to discuss the environment and human rights further.

I created a table to summarise some of the examples of human rights education in the EFL textbooks for 7th, 8th and 9th grades. In the table, "youth" refers to the life of the youth and everything included in it, such as friends and family, hobbies, health and daily life, while "active citizenship" includes education, equality, democracy, safety and security.

Table 1. Examples of HRE in the EFL textbooks

THEMES	7 th GRADE	8 th GRADE	9 th GRADE
Active citizenship	bullying, school uniforms	immigration, the EU	human rights, racism
Multiculturalism and multilingualism	different countries, different languages	indigenous people, travelling	different countries, historical aspects
Sustainable development	nature and me	weather phenomena	climate change, SDGs
Youth	family, school	friendships, social networks	summer job, debating

It is clear that in both *On the Go* and *Scene* most of the matters and discussions related to human rights are presented implicitly. The texts and images are presented in ways that primarily enable and enhance the learning of English. However, the publishers have decided to embed human rights content, such as climate change and gender equality, in the studied chapters increasing human rights themes in education. Mostly human rights are presented explicitly in the 9th grade textbooks.

Otava's textbooks include illustrating drawings of human rights (see Examples 2 and 4). The authors give learners the possibility to describe what they are seeing in the drawings, which increases learner-centred education and the pupils' analytical thinking. In the EFL textbooks, human rights are approached from the point of view of the youth. Most of the texts and images in the studied textbooks are of young people. While this is understandable given the pupils' age, it would be important to include people of all ages in the textbooks' texts and pictures (see Example 2).

Unit 9 in *On the Go 3* (2018, pp. 158-173) stands out from the other chapters of the examined textbooks, since it focuses almost entirely on human rights issues. The chapter underlines the importance of bringing current affairs into the lives of 9th graders, since 15-year-old teenagers are increasingly becoming interested in society. At that age, many rights, such as being able to obtain a driving licence for a moped, and responsibilities, such as criminal responsibility, are granted for young people. Furthermore, after completing the final phase of basic education, pupils are often continuing their studies in upper secondary school or in vocational upper secondary school. It is crucial to tell them about the human rights that affect their daily lives.

However, the organisation of the textbooks' chapters implies that studying human rights themes thoroughly in the EFL classroom is not one of the main objectives of foreign language lessons. For example, in *On the Go 3*, the final unit of the textbook, unit 9, includes discussions on the Sustainable Development Goals, democracy and human rights. Teaching large groups with limited hours does not always leave time for the last unit of the textbooks to be studied. Grammar, new vocabulary and communicative tasks are primarily explored in the EFL classroom, whereas explicit human rights education may be seen as a filler to be used in the classroom, if there is enough time at the end of the study period. The textbooks' final texts and exercises may be useful, while differentiating the pupils, too. Why do the publishers choose to include explicit human rights education more as additional information in the textbooks? I believe that one of the reasons could be that human rights specialists have not presumably participated in creating the learning materials, therefore the textbook publishers have not wanted to take liberties with such significant topics.

Although there are examples of human rights content in the examined textbooks, the textbooks have not utilised networking as fully as the NCC and the WPHRE have hoped that they would. The Plan of Action for the First Phase of the World Programme for Human

Rights Education (2006, p. 20) emphasises that one of its main objectives is to “support networking and cooperation among local, national, regional and international institutions”. Furthermore, the National Core Curriculum (2014, p. 7) states that schools’ activities should be linked to other local activities to promote the well-being and learning of children and young people. In addition, the NCC (2014, p. 397) underlines that foreign language classrooms offer pupils opportunities to network and connect with people around the world. The Curriculum also underlines that teaching provides the capacity for inclusion and active advocacy (ibid.). Networking and cooperation with other stakeholders are not evident in the EFL textbooks. For instance, the chapters on sustainable development do not include links, or the like, to the organisations’ websites that advance sustainable development. Cooperating with various organisations and communities would give the pupils more possibilities to advance human rights in their own personal lives.

The teachers’ role is crucial in HRE in the EFL classroom. For example, the pupils are introduced to the Sustainable Development Goals in *On the Go 3*, and it is the teacher’s decision to use these tasks and make them part of human rights education. Non-governmental organisations, such as Plan International, offer material on SDGs for both teachers and pupils. Thus, if teachers want to discuss SDGs and their meaning and impact further, they can use the material found on different NGOs’ websites. Furthermore, teaching materials often contain extra material that can be used in the classroom. Otava granted me an additional access to their teaching materials that include tips and extra exercises on human rights for the teachers to use, for instance. It is noteworthy that the teaching materials provided by Otava has not been examined further, as it is not the focus of the study.

In Finland, teachers can choose quite freely what they include in their lessons. Therefore, especially in Finland, including HRE in EFL teaching is the teacher’s decision to an extent. Whether teachers want to commit to teaching or telling about human rights is their choice as long as they follow the guidelines provided by the NCC. National legislation could affect the amount of HRE provided in classrooms. Since the teachers’ role in choosing to discuss HRE in the EFL classroom is significant, the right tools, in teacher training or later on in their working life, should be given to teachers for them to be able to teach and tell about human rights issues to their pupils and students. As mentioned above, according to Kasa (2019, pp. 13-14), 96% of teacher trainees would like to have democracy and human rights education as part of their teacher education. However, 10% of subject teacher trainees believe that

pedagogical studies do not require democracy and human rights education, because they believe that HRE is already part of the basic knowledge of the subject that they teach (ibid.). Nevertheless, the human rights content is often implicit, which requires a great deal of attention from the teacher in this regard.

In Klaus Krippendorff's content analysis, it is mentioned that texts do not have objective qualities – a text does not exist without a reader (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 28). This is the case with the examined EFL textbooks and workbooks, too. The meanings of the textbooks' texts and images are interpreted by the readers. However, Daffue-Karsten et al. (2018-2019) have made a clear decision to include human rights content in their textbooks. The authors have included human rights topics in the textbooks to be read and interpreted in the EFL classroom – all of the *On the Go* textbooks used in lower secondary school have some information on respecting others, sustainable development or equality, for instance.

Although Banfield et al. (2017-2019) and Hiltti et al. (2017) have included instances in which human rights education is evident, they have not done it as clearly as Sanoma Pro's authors have. One example is the way school uniforms are discussed in the series' textbooks. *On the Go 1* (2019, pp. 68-69) has included comments about the equality between students, while *Scene 1* focuses on the easiness of wearing the same school uniforms. Hiitti et al. (2017) have presumably wanted to avoid difficult topics, such as discrimination and inequality between students, and have focused on the practicalities of wearing school uniforms. These are the opportunities that publishers and authors could take into consideration, when discussing human rights education in language classrooms. Due to cultural differences, such as school uniforms, EFL classrooms provide various possibilities to address human rights issues that are occurring around the world.

Furthermore, Krippendorff states that the meanings invoked by texts do not need to be shared (Krippendorff, 2013, pp. 28-29). It is rare that people share the same opinion and agree on a certain text. For example, pupils do not always agree on the discussed human rights topics. The most important part of content analysis is to be able to explain own interpretations. In this study, I have aimed at explaining my interpretations of the EFL textbooks and workbooks. In addition, Krippendorff (ibid., pp. 30-31) claims that the nature of text demands that content analysts draw specific inferences from a body of texts to their chosen context. Readers interpret the texts – texts never speak for themselves (ibid.). It is also evident that texts do not

have single meanings (Krippendorff, 2013, pp. 28). Content analysts believe that any text may have multiple readings (ibid.) Although *On the Go 1* (2019, pp. 68-69) focuses on school uniforms in one of its sections, the section includes also other meanings, such as equality. The studied main topic is not the only topic that could, and should, be addressed while studying the chapter. The studied chapter may have other, implicit meanings that enables the inclusion of human rights education in the classroom.

5.2 Limitations of the study

The researcher must always think about the solutions she has made, the coverage of the analysis and the limitations of the study as the work progresses (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). Using systematic content analysis, this thesis examines all the textbooks and workbooks in the *On the Go* and the *Scene* series, so the work is quite comprehensive. However, I have not provided quantitative information on the amount of human rights content found in the textbooks. One of the reasons for this is that the study is exploratory, as there are no prior studies focusing on HRE in Finnish EFL textbooks.

It is noteworthy that Otava's textbooks are in digital form, whereas Sanoma Pro's textbooks are in printed form. Therefore, different reading strategies are employed, while analysing the EFL textbooks. To avoid misinterpretations, I have had to be aware of my own views, so that they would not affect the interpretation. According to Eskola and Suoranta (1998), the researcher is an important research tool in her study, because the starting point in qualitative research is subjectivity. My own ideas are marked clearly in this thesis to make the study reliable. The translations of various references have been translated by me.

A disadvantage of the study is that the examination of the educational continuum from early childhood education to the end of secondary education is weak, although the NCC (2014) emphasises the importance of continuity in education. This study focuses only on the textbooks used in lower secondary school.

5.3 Future research

There are many ways in which human rights education in the EFL classroom can be studied further. All the available EFL textbooks and workbooks, printed and digital, that are published in Finland could be examined for future research. Furthermore, comparing the various textbooks might be useful to decipher the degree of human rights related issues in EFL textbooks. In addition, at a national level, the textbooks of other school subjects, both in lower and upper secondary school, could be analysed. For instance, social studies' textbooks provide interesting opportunities for studying human rights education. Furthermore, this thesis analyses texts and images presented in EFL textbooks. Therefore, in addition to studying learning and teaching materials, other studies could include interviews or EFL classroom observations to find out more about human rights education.

Research could also be conducted in a way that includes materials offered by the NGOs, too. The teachers' and students' materials provided by non-governmental organisations, such as Amnesty International and Plan International, could be used in the EFL classroom to an extent to see how human rights education could be embedded in the English language classroom. Many international organisations offer materials especially in English, so the EFL classroom would be a great place to use them. Furthermore, this thesis studied specifically the United Nations' World Programme for Human Rights Education and the National Core Curriculum for basic education. Other studies could focus on other national agreements or use different human rights education programmes as a basis for the study.

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